

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1450

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USCINCEUR

CINCLANT

C O N F I D E N T I A L PONTA DELGADA 0202

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: AZOREAN DEVELOPMENTS-JUNTA PROTESTS TO COSTA GOMEZ

REF: PONTA DELGADA 196

1. AFTER MEETING ALMOST SEVEN HOURS DISCUSSING STATUTE OF AUTONOMY APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS THE AZOREAN REGIONAL JUNTA DECIDED TO PROTEST DIRECTLY TO PRESIDENT COSTA GOMEZ. ACCORDING TO A JUNTA SOURCE GENERAL MAGALHAES IN A LONG MIDNIGHT TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH COSTA GOMEZ ASKED THAT STATUTE NOT BE PROMULGATED AS APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. MAGALHAES REPORTEDLY SAID THE JUNTA COULD NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE AZORES IF THE STATUTE WERE NOT CHANGED.

2. THE JUNTA ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE STATING THE STATUTE WAS CLEARLY UNSATISFACTORY AND STATING THAT THE JUNTA HAD INFORMED THE PRESIDENT OF ITS WORRIES AND RESERVATIONS. THE COMMUNIQUE SAID THAT MEASURES WOULD BE TAKEN TO REVIEW THE POINTS WHICH THE JUNTAS BELIEVE SHOULD BE CHANGED. THE JUNTA
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PROMISED TO DO EVERYTHING TO MAKE REAL THE POLITICAL ADMINISTRAT-

IVE AUTONOMY ESTABLISHED IN THE CONSTITUTION AND CALLED ON THE PEOPLE FOR SUPPORT AND CALM.

3. ON MAY 5 THE TWO PPD MEMBERS OF THE REGIONAL JUNTA, HENRIQUE DE AGUIAR RODRIQUES AND JOSE PACHECO DE ALMEDA, RESIGNED IN PROTEST TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS CHANGES IN THE PROVISIONAL AZOREAN STATUTE. WE HAVE HEARD THAT THE PS MEMBERS, VARGAS AND GOULART, HAVE INSTRUCTIONS FROM THEIR PARTY TO REMAIN IN THE JUNTA.

4. COMMENT: THE PPD IS GAMBLING THAT ITS DECISION TO HAVE ITS MEMBERS LEAVE AZOREAN GOVERNMENT BODIES WILL PAY OFF IN THE JUNE REGIONAL ELECTIONS. ITS ACTION MAY BACKFIRE, HOWEVER, IF THE POSTS ITS MEMBERS VACATED ARE FILLED BY OTHERS WHO ARE MORE ACCOMMODATING TO LISBON AND THE PPD MAY BE BLAMED FOR ABANDONING THE GOVERNMENT. ALTHOUGH THE REGIONAL JUNTA HAS SPLIT ON HOW TO REACT TO THE CHANGE IN THE STATUTE, THOSE WHO REMAIN ARE UNHAPPY WITH THE TRUNCATED VERSION. THE TWO INDEPENDENT JUNTA MEMBERS JACOME CORREIA AND MONJARDINO WILL BE UNDER PRESSURE TO RESIGN ALSO. IF THEY GO, GENERAL MAGALHAES MAY ALSO LEAVE THE JUNTA. NO ONE HERE HAS A CLEAR IDEA OF WHAT THE NEXT FEW DAYS WILL BRING. PEOPLE ARE BEGINNING TO TALK OF INDEPENDENCE AGAIN. WHATEVER THE OUTCOME OF THIS CRISIS, IT WILL INCREASE THE DISTRUST OF THE GOP HELD BY MOST AZOREANS AND HEIGHTEN THE POSSIBILITIES OF FUTURE CONFLICTS BETWEEN AN ELECTED AZOREAN ASSEMBLY AND THE GOP.
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